



## BOOK EXTRACT

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Author:	Mick Abrahams
Foreword by:	Bob Harris
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## Chapter 24 The Branding of Jethro Tull

As the first three months of the band passed, we started getting what could be considered quite a reasonable repertoire. We seemed to gel well together initially as a hard-hitting blues/rock outfit with definite leanings toward jazz, which stood us in good stead with a lot of the growing army of fans from the various clubs and pub venues that we were playing up and down the country. For some reason or other I started playing an instrumental version of a song called *Cat's Squirrel*, which up until that point in time I had only heard from Cream. I had been playing a slightly different version of it while I was still in McGregor's Engine, but it seemed to evolve and take on a life of its own. It was different nearly every gig but still just keeping the main unmistakable pattern of the main riff. It was great to be able to improvise over the theme of the song and it went down a storm wherever we played. Ian's tour de force was of course that wonderful Roland Kirk song *Serenade to a Cuckoo*, which he played beautifully and with great passion and still does to this day when he is inclined. Clive even ended up with his own drum solo show stopper *Dharma for One*, which was written by Ian and Clive. It was manic every time and always brought the audience to its feet. Glenn was one of the most original and inventive bassists I've ever played with. His style was completely off the wall at times and naturally when he was in the mood to do a showcase solo he would have the crowd going wild too.

We were definitely "happening" as they used to say and we were being noticed by such people as John Gee, then manager of the famous Marquee Club in Wardour Street, London. This was the deal. If John thought you were good enough to play at the Marquee, he would give you a chance by doing a support spot for the main act of the evening and your pay for the night was I seem to remember, around £15.00, which was deducted from the main act's money. They were usually on a percentage, so if we got a full house (and in 98% of cases we did) they were fine and everyone went home paid and happy. The support band though used to collect a following of fans as well as the people who paid to see the main band. This was

always noticed by John Gee, who would in turn reward the support band with a top spot at some point to see if they would take off too.

It was about this time that Terry Ellis, our manager, had started doing some serious promoting and general wheeling and dealing behind the scenes to get the band to take off into the big time. To that effect he called a meeting in the offices of the Ellis Wright Agency in Regent Street and introduced us to one of the bookers, by the name of Dave Robinson, who had recently left university after having obtained a degree in history and, I believe, sociology. He took one look at Ian's trampish look (one which Ian worked at constantly to induce people to think he was totally off his truck!) and our general scruffiness and unkempt appearance and said; 'I have got a great name for you lot. Jethro Tull!'

'Who the heck is Jethro Tull?' I asked, completely puzzled but at the same time, thinking it most definitely was very original and had a certain ring to it. He explained that Jethro Tull was a real historical figure who had revolutionised the agricultural industry by inventing a thing called the seed drill using the workings of an old-fashioned bellow organ or harmonium.

The only seed drill I had ever known up until that point, I thought irreverently, was the one that I used in my pants and that didn't have anything to do with agriculture or harmoniums! He had a good point though; we certainly all looked like something that had been dragged across a dirty field or run over by a combine harvester. Ian especially fit that image, although it was never the intention for Ian to become known as Jethro Tull; it was just a name for the whole band. It was settled. Jethro Tull we would become. There was always some confusion with the fans as to the name. Was it the band? Or was it Ian and the band? But frankly it didn't matter to any of us at all and we carried on under that name and a right good decision it was too!